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LOVE AND THE YEAR

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

GRACE GRISWOLD



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LOVE AND THE YEAR
AND OTHER POEMS

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GRACE GRISWOLD

AUTHOR OF "BILLIE'S FIRST LOVE"
AND "HIS JAPANESE WIFE"



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TO MY MOTHER

Two pictures, dear,
Before me here
Are smiling on me while I write;
The same kind face,
The same sweet grace,
The same expression, good and bright.

In one a crown
Of wavy brown
Adorns a brow unseamed with care.
That once fair brow
Is older now
And clustered round with soft gray hair.

Though age may place
Upon this face
Fresh lines, they're lines upon a scroll,
They can't deface,
They only trace
Some new denotement of the soul.

A published page,
The face of age,
The record life has written there.
What youth conceals
Old age reveals,
The story of the soul laid bare.

High-mindedness
And kindness
And love are written in this face;
I could not spare
A furrow there,
Each has a meaning and a grace.

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LOVE AND THE YEAR

OVER the hills with you, dear,
Over the hills with you,
In the spring of the year,
When the blossoms appear,
When new life is springing in all nature's veins
And love-songs are ringing in myriad strains,
When earth and the air are all fragrant and mellow
And each living thing longs to mate with its fellow,
Over the hills with you.

Over the hills with you, dear,
Over the hills with you.
In the fall of the year,
When the meadows are sere,
When forests flash golden and red in the sun
And harvested fields tell of work that is done,
When winds sing a requiem over the flowers
And mournfully sigh for the lost summer hours,
Over the hills with you.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

Over the hills with you, dear,
 Over the hills with you,
All through the year,
 Under green boughs and sere,
For what, though time wrinkles your beautiful face,
It adds a new charm to your sweet spirit's grace;
And my heart thrills afresh as I think of the store
That love has laid up for our souls ever more,
 Over the hills with you.

BRIDAL SONG

THE Sun-God rose from out the sea
And shed his glory on the earth;
So, Sweet, the whole world smiled to me
When from the night our love had birth.

The Sun-God kissed the frost away
And warmed the north wind's wintry strife;
So, Sweet, your dear lips stole one day
All coldness from my heart and life.

The sun rose high, his warm embrace
Shot life throughout the mellowed earth;
So, Sweet, our souls beneath love's grace,
Are thrilling with a new life's birth.

LOVE'S EMPIRE

I WOULD I were the sun, that I might dare
To gaze unchecked upon your lovely face,
I would I were the breezes of the air
That I might fold you in a rapt embrace.

I would I were the page beneath your look,
That so my inmost heart your heart might read.
I would I were the thoughts within that book,
That to your inmost soul my soul might speed.

I would I were the draught from yonder spring,
Which soon unto your lips will find the way,
I would like yonder linnet I might sing
And make sweet music for you all the day.

I envy every little thing, dear heart,
Which has upon your wish the slightest call,
I would I might the universe impart,
Yet be myself to you the all in all.

Oh, love, I want you with such deep desire,
I would my life in yours might through and through
Be fused and blended by love's sacred fire,
Forever knowing, loving, only you.

THE SLEEPER

NEAR by his measured breathing tells that sleep
Holds now his wearied sense in gentle fold.

Ah! favored sleep, that dearest form to hold,
And o'er his soul a cloistered watch to keep.

Why may not I upon your vigil creep,

And all the tenderness which now controlled
Lies buried deep within my heart, make bold
Upon his rapt unconsciousness to heap?

I on his lips a simple kiss would press,
So light it should not break the slumber spell;
And stroke his hair with gentle, soft caress,
And murmur in his ear a word—ah well!

He would awaken. I must then confess.
Sweet Sleep, you are a better sentinel.

THE SHUTTLE

WHEN up from night's dim margin breaks the
dawn,
With ruddy glow illumines the eastern skies,
And through the curtain-chinks peers in mine eyes,
Bids sleep with all her counterfeits begone,
Exchanging light and life for visions wan.
One vision which my yearning spirit tries
To hold a little longer ere it dies,
Dies not, but in my waking thoughts lives on.

And, ever, through the insistent noisy loom
Of day's routine, the sweet dream comes and goes,—
A shuttle weaving through the dingy gloom
Of common tasks, a glowing thread of rose.
But shall the dream aught but a dream become?
If not, then what is life to me? God knows.

SEPARATION

I THOUGHT of late the sun had grown more bright,
A new effulgence filled the heavenly blue,
The woodland green had caught a rarer hue,
And moon and stars more beauteous were by night,
All nature seemed to pulsate with delight,
And even friendly greetings rang more true,
But that was when I knew them, dear, with you,
Ere your departure cast on all a blight.

But now the face of nature wears a frown,
As when the autumn glow has passed away
And left the woods all clad in sombre brown,
Whilst creaking limbs their withered leaves shake down;
Now, too, the friendly round is cold and gray,
As if with you had passed its kindling ray.

NON REQUIESCIT IN PACE

THERE lies within the region of the heart
A spot which may by none save one be found,
A sad, sad spot, from all the rest apart,
Where dead hopes lie entombed,—a burial ground

For all the past; the sins, the pains and sighs
And hours that slipped with gladsome speed away,
Swift bearing with them some forbidden prize,
Too sweet, too satisfying, long to stay.

'Mong many graves that all unheeded lie,
With names forgotten in the flight of years,
Is one by which the soul doth sit and sigh,
Kept green by many a copious shower of tears.

Here lies the dear companion of those hours
That fled away like wingéd steeds of old
Or as the genial Southland's lovely flowers,
That vanish 'neath the north wind's bitter cold.

It is the grave of love that lies so green,
Where, in the wakeful watches of the night,
Or midday, to all else perhaps serene,
The sad soul sits and grieves upon its blight.

THE VACANT HOUSE

I

I'VE often pondered on the parable
Of him who cast the devil from his soul,
Who, finding his retreat unbearable,
Returned with seven others far more foul.
The house was empty, swept and garnishéd,
So in they rushed for riot all athirst,
And of that man the Blessed Savior said,
His last estate was far worse than his first.
'Tis not enough, to banishment, to doom
An occupant that preys upon the life;
'Tis not enough to sweep and cleanse the room,
It must be filled to keep that house from strife.
'Tis little use to cast a devil out,
Unless an angel comes to hold the rout.

THE VACANT HOUSE

II

THERE is, in its effect upon the mind,
But little choice between the thought and deed,
And every action, of whatever kind,
Is but the offspring of a hidden seed.
Sometimes, unconsciously, an evil thought,
In life, whose outward seeming is most fair,
Has all unseen its baleful mischief wrought,
Till by some sudden exigence laid bare.
Thus unexpectedly may be revealed,
Perhaps to one who was not rightly loved,
A power, to which he cannot choose but yield,
Although by better instincts disapproved.
But had an angel come that house to share,
No other guest had dared to enter there.

A LITANY

WHEN the nerves are tingling, burning,
When the brain is reeling, turning,
When the heart is sick with yearning,
God have mercy on the soul.

When, by disappointment maddened,
Or by failure deadened, saddened,
By no spark of courage gladdened,
God have mercy on the soul.

When the struggle seems unending
For a prize not worth the spending,
Death with life for choice contending,
God have mercy on the soul.

When the river darkly teeming
Seems to call beneath its gleaming
To the sleep which hath no dreaming,
God have mercy on the soul.

SICK-BED REVERIES

CLOCK in the dead of night,
Sweet on the ear of pain,
Telling of hours in flight
Never to come again,—

Cock 'ere the peep of dawn,
Herald of coming day,
Telling of darkness drawn,
Soon now to steal away,—

Bells on the early air,
Calling first thoughts above,
Telling of praise and prayer,
Due to the King of Love,—

Sounds of the city life
Wakening one by one,
Telling of endless strife,
Work that is never done,—

Sun with a blasting heat,
Slums with a pois'nous breath,
Telling of fevered feet
Treading the road to death,—

LOVE AND THE YEAR

Sky that is clear and broad,
Land of productive soil,
Telling of gifts of God
Meant for the sons of toil,—

Darkness on all below
Softly descending,
Telling of joy and woe
Hid in death's blending.

RESERVES

O WHY are these treasures withheld all about us—
The wealth that the ocean will never upheave,
The blessings of nature within and without us,
We may not reveal and we cannot receive?

The violet blooms, which no eye shall discover,
The vine holds a grape, that will never be pressed,
The earth clasps a jewel, no hand shall uncover,
The poet's best poem is never expressed.

The dearest love-story may never be uttered,
Because there's so often a bar to the bower,
And only by one can that guard be unshuttered
And that one is bound or is blind to his power.

Perhaps for a time some rare blessing may cheer you,
An echo of heaven, a song and a thrill,
But before you can realize heaven is near you,
The blessing has passed and its echoes are still,

Then why do men starve, with abundance beside them?
And why do they shiver, who stand by the fire?
And why do they grope, with a beacon to guide them?
And why do we grovel, while yet we aspire?

LOVE AND THE YEAR

Though gifts, which the brain and the heart cannot measure,
Are bursting the treasures in and about us,
Such gifts, as to give and receive were but pleasure,
Yet the world wags contentedly onward without us.

And when the rapt soul, in impulsive upheaval,
Its untutored message outpours on the world;
It may be received in a coolness quite civil,
Or may on itself be indignantly hurled.

Or when, with unauthorized hand, we endeavor,
Through purpose or madness to grasp at a prize;
The world sets the thief-brand upon us forever,
And to the lost station we never may rise.

And yet there's an instinct in every man living
Asserting a right in these treasures of life,
A right of receiving, another of giving,
The right to attain without rancor or strife.

And the right to assume that these yearnings within us
For blessings we do and do not understand,
Must some day and somewhere the privilege win us,
To give and receive with an unreserved hand.

SONG OF THE SOUL

SOMETIMES from deepest caverns of the soul,
Above the daily pleasure, pain and strife,
That babble on the surface of our life,
A voice insistent over all will roll;

And in the mighty cadence of that sound,
Up-driven from the hungry void below,
Like some outburst of long-imprisoned woe,
All other clamor is absorbed and drowned:—

“What, think you that these little joys and thrills,—
Pursuit of art, of science, or of fashion,
Of work, of ease, of pleasure or of passion,
The deep, vast yearning of the spirit fills?

“Where friendship dies, if not by effort fanned,
Where pleasure blanches in satiety,
And self-advancement rules society,
Where love may seldom be too closely scanned?

“Think you to find the soul’s complete desire,
Where even rocks may crumble and decay,
Where blossoms bloom and wither in a day,
Where all may vanish into flood and fire?

LOVE AND THE YEAR

“ Ah, no, think not in earthly paths to find
Aught but a part, a fraction of the whole,
Of that great gift, shall satisfy the soul,
When known the end for which it was designed.

“ Ah happy he, whose heart is still ascendant
Above the joys and sorrows of the hour,
Whilst using them as means of greater power
For reaching toward the blessing all-transcendent.”

MOODS

WHEN the heart is full of gladness,
When it sings for very rapture,
Rain and storm and tempest even,
In their fury seem rejoicing.
Then the melancholy sea-shore
And the moaning of the night winds
Laugh through all their minor cadence
At the very thought of sorrow.
Then the pensive, purple twilight
Tempt no retrospective yearning;
And the sighing of the fir trees
And the souging of the rushes
Tell no mystery of grieving.
Then the toiling bell's vibrations
Do not waken sad reflections,
Nor the chirping of the crickets,
Nor the croaking of the marsh-frogs
Stir a nameless, restless feeling,
Nor the lonesome hoot of night-owl
Flood the soul with desolation.

When the heart is full of gladness,
When it sings for very rapture,
Nature's darkest shadows brighten
And earth palpitates with glory.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

When the heart has lost its lightness,
And the spirit flags and falters,
Then the wholesome glow of sunshine
Seems a melancholy gilding.
Then the carols of the song-birds
Jar upon discordant heart-strings,
While the azure depths of heaven
Mock imprisoned aspiration.
Then the torrent, madly dashing
From its rocky promontory,
Speaks of life in pride of conquest,
In the height of glory, stricken.
Then is sweet perfume of roses,
But the scent of joy departed.

When the heart has lost its lightness,
When the spirit flags and falters,
Then the minor strains of nature,
Through the soul reverberating,
Echo with a sad insistence.

THE STAR AND THE SONG

A SONG in the air and a star in the heaven,
Which now bendeth low a great gift to impart;
That great gift was love, and still it is given
Where a star lights the soul and a song fills the heart.

The star guideth upward the thought of the life
And the song in the heart meaneth peace and good will;
For love cannot live amidst rancor and strife
Nor from aught unholy its perfume distill.

It was deep in the mid-night whilst all the world slept
That the holiest love which the earth has e'er known,
Amid singing of angels, from heaven down-leapt
By the light of a star to a stall from a throne.

So love that is noble and love that is sure
Comes not in the bustle and glare of the world;
But only in hearts that are simple and pure
Is the Christ-love in all of its beauty unfurled.

INCARNATUS

AN angel watching o'er the earth
Adown the ages from creation
And sadly waiting for a pause
In nation's bitter strife with nation,

At last beheld the promised time
When warlike banners all were furled
While gentle peace, with olive crowned,
Walked joyously throughout the world.

So when the night had fully come,
Which was to see the Savior's birth,
As if the universe scarce breathed,
Deep stillness fell upon the earth;

And shepherds, gazing at the stars,
Imagined they were drawing nigh
With swift and noiseless step across
The midnight velvet of the sky;

Till all at once they seemed to merge
And lose their shapes in gushing light,
And color palpitating on
The startled bosom of the night.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

An angel presently emerged
 From out the brightness overhead.
The shepherds fell upon the ground
 In fear and trembling, men half dead.

But soothingly the angel spake
 And told them of the Savior's birth
From whom new life and joy should flow
 To all the peoples of the earth.

Forthwith a host of angels sang
 Of glory unto God most high,
Of peace, good will toward men, like bells
 Sweet ringing down the radiant sky.

But fainter grew the song, until
 It drew up into heaven once more,
The light had gone. Again the stars
 Were shining as they shone before.

The shepherds rose and sought the child
 And worshipped him on bended knee;
No richer gift had they, nor needed,
 Than their sweet faith's entirety.

They first to hear the Gospel note,
 They first to greet the Advent Lord
Whose lives through simple duties ran,
 Whose minds no worldly wisdom stored.

THE LEGEND OF ST. VALENTINE AND THE BLIND GIRL

A FLOOD of moonlight on the city lay,
All silent were her light-and-shadowed streets,
Save where the watchman paced his quiet round
And Meta Sudens' sparkling water rose
To fall again with melancholy plash.
Fair Rome! how beautiful beneath the moon
Now slept her temples, marts and palaces!
But dark, amidst the whiteness all around,
Colossal Nero stood, a mass of bronze—
A fearsome symbol of those evil times.
There, drunk with blood of saints and still as death,
The mighty Flavian Amphitheatre glowered
From darkened archways on the bloodstained ring,
Its giant statues traversed phantom-like
By spectral shadows from the drifting clouds,
Until they seemed to shudder and recoil
From scenes which men had revelled in that day.
A sudden roar from out the lions' den—
An oath, a lash, and silence reigned once more.
Most dread of all, the prison Mamartine,
Where Paul the Apostle once a captive lay,
Loomed grim against the sky.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

There, on this night,
When spring's first softness filled the fragrant air,
St. Valentine his painful vigil kept,
Awaiting eagerly the morn, when he,
Through martyr's death, should join the heavenly throng.
But hark! the bolt withdraws, Nerea comes,
The jailor's fair blind daughter, bringing fruit
And wine and food to Valentine, and begs
That he will pardon her delay, as she
Was stayed unwillingly. "I dared not come
Till all was still. Ah, that I might do more
To ease thy pain."

"Hush, child, 'twill soon be gone."
She took the hand he laid upon her head,
And, kissing it, placed violets therein,
Which she had gathered from the Tiber's bank.
A moment on the sad, sweet face he looked,
The large eyes, dark and void, the girlish form
Just rounding into lovely womanhood,
And suddenly, up through his lonely heart
A wave of feeling long imprisoned rose
And flooded all his being; but, just then,
The lamp flared up and shone upon the cross.
Impulsively he crushed within his hands
The violets she brought, and through the cell
There stole a perfume like the breath of spring.
She marvelled till he said, "Thus, child, the heart
Once broken by the loving hand of God
Breathes forth a heavenly fragrance on the world."
"I know," replied the girl, "that sorrow borne
With patience brings us happiness at last.
When with my playmates I was wont to roam
In springtime, through the gardens, woods and fields,

ST. VALENTINE AND THE BLIND GIRL

I often wondered at their ecstasy,—
What golden sunshine meant and purple flowers;
And once, when Fabia bade me see myself
Repeated in the fountain at our feet,
I cried, 'For shame to say what cannot be!'
But softly then one whispered: 'Hush, she's blind!'
And so I knew at last what blindness meant
And through my heart a bitter sadness crept,
But thou hast shed the light of heaven there."

St. Valentine, with thoughtful pity, gazed
Upon the sightless girl and said, "My child,
I've prayed for thee by night and day; Thou too,
If this shall come to pass, must pray for faith.
At midnight come again. The viands take,
For 'this kind goeth not, except by fast
And prayer.'"

At midnight came the girl again
And drew the bolt, but silence reigned within.
She feared she knew not what, till listening heard
The measured breathing of the praying saint.
Thus reassured she waited silently.
He heard her not, for he was vision-rapt,
And seemed among the throng that followed Christ,
When Bartimaeus by the roadside sat.
He saw the miracle of healing done,
And felt the Savior turn and look on him
With love and approbation, and he knew
The sweet assurance meant his prayer was heard.
Then, conscious of another presence there,
He bade her come.

She knelt, her eyes upturned
And bright with tears, while fervently he prayed:

LOVE AND THE YEAR

“ Dear Lord, now graciously send down Thy light
On this Thy child, that as Thy blessed Truth
Has banished darkness from her soul, so from
Her mortal eyes the veil may be withdrawn.

‘ As is thy faith, so be it unto thee.’ ”

A shudder passed throughout her frame, and then,
As when the day breaks on a sleeping sea,
A new strange light suffused her eyes. They sought
St. Valentine’s. The lamp-light flickered out—
She needed it no more, but wondered why
She had not heard the human face was like
The sun and shed a glory round about.

LIFE, JOY, GRIEF

WHAT is life but what we make it?
What is joy unless we take it?
Where is grief, when we forsake it?

Joy is goodness inward shining.
Grief, oft' selfishness repining.
Life is colored by its lining.

VIA VITAE

LIFE has cross-ways,
Life has by-ways,
We ourselves would not select,
But these by-ways
Lead to high-ways
Grander than we dared expect.

Be they cross-ways,
Be they by-ways,
Or where never man has trod,
Cross-ways, by-ways—
Make them high-ways,
Leading onward to your God.

A PRAYER

O H give me a heart that is pure to its core,
And give me an open mind,
To receive from nature and life the ore,
And yield it again refined.

Let also the marge of the smelter be
As wide as the sun-bound day,
And love the flame of life in me
To melt its dross away.

THE HILL-TOP AND THE VALLEY

WHY grieve for the hill-top beyond you,
When the valley is sweet and serene?
Why rail at the weeds growing round you,
When flowers are nestled between?

Tread gently, tread gently, my brother,
For look you, deep down in the grass,
Is a blossom that blooms for no other,
To sweeten your way as you pass.

READJUSTMENT

'TIS the harrow of grief and the moisture of tears
That will keep the heart mellow and tender,
And 'tis often beneath the cold snows of neglect
That the fairest of blossoms engender;

But alas for the heart that persistently clings
To the harrow and moisture and cold,
For, though blossoms may bloom, it is sunshine alone,
That can tempt the rich fruit to unfold.

Then, if you can't have the one thing that you want,
There's but one thing to do in that case,
Just to want what you have, for God shines over all,
If you'll only look up in His face.

CONSTANCY

AS passing through this world of misconception,
Where actions do not always speak the heart,
Where confidence is shattered by deception
And slander even breaks true friends apart,

How comforting a friend who is not shaken
By what appear backslidings in our lives,
Assuming howsoe'er we are mistaken,
Within the soul an honest purpose thrives.

A GIFT

WHAT tribute can I pay to thee, dear friend,
Who hast of fortune's gifts so full a share,
That were I all my means and wit to spend,
The purchase with thine own would ill compare?

Yet may this bit of handiwork enwrought
About with love and care of thee, still meet
The welcome that a richer gift had brought,
If giver's love can make acceptance sweet.

FRIENDSHIP

I THINK there is no finer name on earth than that of friend,
For all relations else in that one term begin and end.

The father—he is scarce a friend when deaf to childhood's call,
While husband, wife, alas, are often hardly friends at all;

And mother-love, the strongest love, is sometimes at the core,
A tyranny of selfishness, brute instinct, nothing more.

The bonds of kinship often grow first irksome and then slack
And shift their obligations to the nearest passing hack;

And sweet-hearts, ah! with nothing else, the flimsiest sort of tie,
The closest chums, perhaps, to-day, and strangers by and by.

But there is something firm and fine about the friendly bond,
Without it every other state is built on shifting ground;

LOVE AND THE YEAR

And love itself, without that guide, like Phoebus drives it
blind
And leaves a wreckage in its track of shattered heart and
mind.

And yet, as all are human, even friendship may succumb
To stress of human weakness when the hours of trial come;

As Peter once denied his Lord, then wept in bitter shame,
And lived to be his friend indeed, a martyr to his name.

So every friend, whate'er he be, a simple friend, no other,
Or still a friend, while bearing name of sweetheart, husband,
brother,

Though he may sometime fail to stand as high as once he
stood,
He will not rest till he has tried to make that failure good,

If underneath, abiding yet, his heart is kind and true,
And still he finds sweet friendship's code, "noblesse oblige"
in you.

So friendship thrives, like love, on what each in the other
finds,
The tie of fellow-service is the only tie that binds.

PHANTOMS

COME on, ye flitting phantoms of the night,
That glint and vanish in the moon-lit brain,
Like love, enticed by some false beacon light,
Recoiling to its hidden realm again.

Whence come these vague and evanescent forms,
That baffle every grasp of searching thought;
As windswept, vap'rous blasts of midnight storms,
From void to void through rigging pass uncaught?

What are these phantoms? Gems of thought unborn,
Great inspirations falling half concealed,
Which common minds will only heed to scorn,
Till genius has their hidden worth revealed.

MARGARET

THE monarch in our house
Is dimpled o'er with smiles.
The sceptre that she wields,
Her winning little wiles.

She wears a golden crown,
Spun fine of baby hair,
She mounts a higher throne
Than any royal chair.

Her subjects gather round
And kiss her little hand,
And fly with willing feet
To do her least command.

She lays a mighty toll
Our fealty to prove,
But the tribute that we pay
Is drawn in drafts of love.

DOROTHY

NEVER cloud so glowing
At the break of day,
As the rose-bloom showing
In her cheek alway.

Never eyes were brighter
In their depths of blue,
Never step was lighter,
Never heart so true,

Never heart so weary,
But when she draws nigh,
With her spirit cheery,
Quite forgets to sigh.

THANKSGIVING DAY

S NOW glints from the side-walks and fences,
With frost in the wintry north wind,
But now, friends, the good cheer commences,
And glows through the closely-drawn blind.

Now comes with an odor appealing
The turkey so chesty and grand
And covers but partly concealing
The rarest good things in the land.

A pop and a sparkle and bubble,
A jest and the laughter rings gay
And Care, with his basket of trouble,
Is banished completely away.

So here's to the lord of the revel,
His lady and each charming guest,
And here's to the absent, poor devil,
And here's to the one we love best.

A BUBBLE

WITHIN this cup of golden wine,
A thousand little bubbles wake
Far down within its deepest shrine
Then upward fly until they break.

But from a far more sacred shrine
Filled with a choicer draught than this,
The spirit of another wine
Flies upward, breaking in a kiss.

CHAMPAGNE TOAST

AS from these depths of golden wine
The little bubbles upward start,
Like thoughts which rise from heart to lips
That ever rise, and so depart,

So rises from my heart this wish,
On little prayer-bulbs upward borne,
That every rose which blooms for you
May be a rose without a thorn.

ANOTHER TOAST

HERE'S a pledge to the truth in those bonnie brown eyes,
And the humor that sparkles there too,
With a nature as sunny as fair summer skies,
And a heart that is loyal and true;

For nothing on earth can do quite so much good
As a face brimming over with light,
So here's to the man, who whatever his mood,
Sheds an influence cheery and bright.

TO A PAIR OF BRIDAL SLIPPERS

SOME day (it is the usual way)
When honeymoon has passed away
And years have brought a dear increase
That often mars domestic peace,—

Some day (it is the usual way)
When parents must assert their sway,
These meek and harmless bridal slippers
May serve a turn as youthful flippers.

FAIRY SONG

COME Jack-o'-lantern, goblin, sprite,
Come fairies all together,
From fen and forest speed your flight,
Come, 'tis the magic hour of night,
All in mid-summer weather.

Come bull-frog, bring your big bass drum,
Come small frogs all together,
Come owl and bat and cricket come,
And nightingale, stay not at home,
Sing sweet the summer weather.

Now sleep has drowned the mortal world,
Come sing we all together
And dance in fairy mazes whirled,
By mystic moon-beam palely pearled,
All in mid-summer weather.

TO A PARROT

POLLY with the festive coat,
And such a solemn little face,
Tell us what distorted fancies
Through your busy noddle chase.

Don't you know 'tis very rude
To interject your senseless babble?
Geese and women-kind reserve
Exclusively the right to gabble;

But please tell us how you manage
Not to be a tiresome bore,
Yet repeat so many times
The same remark you made before.

What a triumph for the lazy,
What economy of brain,
On a round of hackneyed phrases
Always fresh applause to gain!

What excuse have you to live,
You brawling, screeching little sinner,
Stealing other people's wit,
Existing only for your dinner?

LOVE AND THE YEAR

Polly, no, that were a libel,
For your comicality
Often turns some painful train
Of thought to one of jollity.

When the conversation runs
Too close to personality,
Frequently you change the theme
By some droll whimsicality.

When you cry "sing tra la la"
And dance and laugh with all your might,
We were fossilized indeed
To merry not at such a sight.

Polly with the bright green coat
And Roman nose and pink cravat,
Brown eyes with their roguish wink
And yellow gloves and snow-white hat,

Yes, we like you for your tattle,
All your funny little ways.
You shall dance and screech and prattle,
For so you brighten all our days.

THE ANIMALS AT THE SHOW

FOUR animals went to see the show,
A pole-cat, duck, a frog and lamb,
And at the door each handed in,
The currency of Uncle Sam.

"Who'll go in first?" quacked Mrs. Duck,
The biggest talker of the four,
"Why I, of course," croaked Mr. Frog,
And showed his green-back at the door.

And while they questioned who'd go next,
A bee came by and buzzed of honey,
So sweetly, that the door-man quite
Forgot to ask her for the money.

Too late he tried to call her back,
The inner door behind her swung,
And as she disappeared they thought
They heard him hiss the one word, "stung."

"Now Mr. Lamb, let's see you try,"
Said Mr. Pole-cat with a grin,
"Four quarters?" asked the door-man then,
"Yes, quite correct, sir, walk right in."

LOVE AND THE YEAR

“ Well, I’ll be—” “ Never mind, my dear,”
Said Mrs. Duck, “ Now watch me go ;
“ I made a run on the bank to-day,
So I’ve a little bill to show.”

“ Step lively,” then the door-man cried,
And Mr. Pole-cat scratched his head,
“ I trust you’ll let me in, sir, though
I’ve only got a scent,” he said.

“ A cent, indeed !” the pole-cat paled,
He saw the man was getting mad,
“ A scent, indeed,” he held his nose,
“ Get out of here, the cent is bad.”

The pole-cat started down the road,
Indignant, grieved and mortified,
When rolling toward him through the dust,
A hoop-snake presently he spied.

And to the snake he told his tale,
“ Now was it right my cent to spurn ?”
“ Don’t bother me,” the hoopsnake hissed,
“ You see I’ve got to ‘ do a turn.’ ”

A sardine next the story heard.
“ I know,” said he, “ just how you felt ;”
“ I’ve often met with sleights myself,
Because my family is Smelt.”

“ But come with me ; I’ve got the means
Whereby to fix the measly fox ;
He can’t refuse us now, my friend,
Because, you see, I’ve got my box.”

MOTHER GOOSE VARIANTS

THE cow that jumped the moon went back
To the old sky farm one day
And now she runs a dairy in
The good old Milky Way.

Humpty Dumpty went to the show,
But, alas, the play was bad.
“Aha!” said one, “here’s an egg to throw.”
Yes, weep, for the tale is sad.

The bachelor took to himself a wife,
To end his single trouble,
But found that one and one make two
And single troubles double.

AT A DONKEY PARTY

THERE once was a donkey quite queer
Whose tail would at times disappear,
And when it returned,
It disdainfully spurned
To alight at its place in the rear.

OLD PLANTATION HYMN (Revised)

O H, dee cas' ole Dan'l in de lion's den,
All night long.
De lions skeered to tech him, 'cause de Lawd was Dan'l's
frien'

All night long.
An' dee sniff, an' dee sniff, an' dee sniff him out again.
But who's gwine to deliver me?

Ole Jonah he dun sot in de bosom ob de whale,
All night long.
De whale he dun lash an' he splash wid his tail,
All night long.
An' he say to Jonah, "Do you take me foh a jail?"
But who's gwine to deliver me?

Ole 'Lijah got so good dat dee wouldn't have him 'round,
All night long.
An' dere come a firey chariot an' hit took him off de ground,
All night long.
An' his overcoat and handkerchief was all dee ever found,
But who's gwine to deliver me?

LOVE AND THE YEAR

Pharaoh's daughter got to thinkin' how she'd like to have a
chile

All night long.

An' Moses was alyin' in de rushes all de while,

All night long.

An' she fin' him an' she say: "I'll jes' take him home on
tri'l!"

But who's gwine to deliver me?

WHO'S A HERO?

THERE'S nae sic thing," the Scotchman said,
"If you will aye pursuit it,
As rale unselfishness, the kind,
That has nae string tied to it."

An ancient earl upreared a church,
With monks and learning filled it,
But ravaged all the country round
For men and means to build it.

The modern rich man builds and names
The modern institution,
But does his ravaging by law
To forestall retribution.

Our fathers fought for liberty
'Gainst all who should upset it:—
That's liberty for me—and you—
(That is, if you can get it).

"We're all born free and equal," says
Our infant Declaration,
But such a theory, of course,
Admits of—explanation.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

The rights of property trace back
To him who simply took it,
And gave it to his heirs, when he,
By death compelled, forsook it.

So what are they but sharers in
The spoils of devastation?
Then why be proud of what at best
Is only spoliation?

"The world owes me a living," says
A later thief, "bestow it.
Nine points are not possession, for
The tenth is mine, I'll show it."

And if he's big enough to take
A new and dazzling chance,
A magnate he may be proclaimed,
A master of finance.

But let the petty thief attempt
In simpler ways to do it,
He'll get the chance to plan (in jail)
More safely to pursue it.

And let the dazzling venture fail
Through some slight indiscretion,
A suicide, no doubt, will prove
His tenth point in possession.

But there's a gentler selfishness,
Life would be sad without it,
Which seeks its happiness in that
Of others round about it

WHO'S A HERO?

This man converts his country-side
To dwellings for the needy,
It pleases his paternal heart
And no one calls him greedy.

Another builds a Settlement
To culture those who need it,
He has the altruistic taste
And barterers all to feed it.

The mother lives and loves and toils
And spends her soul for others,
She may be thanked, she may be blamed,
It is the way with mothers.

The daily martyrdom—too late
The little tombstone names it.
The meteoric sacrifice—
All history proclaims it.

But just because the human heart
Is such a selfish budget,
We worship those who give their lives
And do not seem to grudge it.

CHRISTIAN (?) SCIENCE

WE all are so good,
If we sit down and brood
On the goodness and "allness" within and without us,
We need have no fear
Our crackers and beer
Will flow from the "allness" and goodness about us.

Of course, "there's no evil,"
'Twould be most uncivil
To make us imperfect, then send us to thunder.
"There's nothing but Love"
In the heavens above,
The pockets of men and the hearts that beat under.

"There can be no trouble"
The body's a bubble—
It's all a mistaken "belief" and a dreaming.
God made us to fool us
Till some one should school us
To see what we see to be only a seeming.

"We're nothing but spirit"—
We really don't hear it,
Or smell it, or taste, or see it, or feel it.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

“There is no sensation,”
Except the temptation
To think what we think, when we think we can't heal it.

This spirit or mind
Was created so blind
We're all of us nursing some little illusion;
But friends by the score
(For a dollar or more)
Will kindly remove the distressing delusion.

“We'll murder no longer
By craft of the stronger,”
Says one, and the body is threatened with schism;—
Rebuked for the use
(Mother Church says abuse)
Of “Malicious Animal Magnetism.”

We never need die,
If only we'll try
To believe that we couldn't, no, not if we would.
We think we've a pain,
We've just to maintain
We haven't, we wouldn't have, not if we should.

'Tis quite a mistaken
Idea we have taken
That there's but one method of race propagation.
A child now to bother
About who's his father
Shows stubborn contempt for the new revelation.

CHRISTIAN (?) SCIENCE

We'll all live together
Like brother and sister:
No longer the mother in sorrow shall bear.
If "Thought is a thing"
Why can we not bring
A child into being by thinking it there?

How can there be sin?
If there's nothing within
Or without us for sin to get busy upon?
There can't be transgression
When we're in possession
Of all that the sun, if there were one, shone on.

'Tis perfectly plain,
Though speaking of pain—
Enduring Himself the last ills of the race,
Christ meant us instead
To reverse what he said
And wait for a "Key" His true meaning to place.

With subtle intention,
He thus failed to mention,
While healing the halt and the deaf and the blind,
The trick of His healing
Was simply revealing
A mortal deception of "Immortal Mind"—

And these "Signs and Wonders"
Arose from the blunders
His Father had made in creating mankind,
And until He was ready
To send Mrs. Eddy
The world must remain to His purposes blind.

LOVE AND THE YEAR

But being quite human,
This high-favored woman
Straightway on the truth a monopoly took,
By copyright dower
Maintaining the power
To levy a tax at three dollars a book.

And lest one should think
For himself, or should drink
From a fountain of truth otherwise than the "Key,"
It is made so obscure
That one's never quite sure
But he knows 'twould be grand if he only could see.

To further maintain
The control of the rein,
The subjects of sermons, the texts to be read,
With no obvious reason
Or reference to season,
For each Sabbath and church are ordained by the "Head."

This "reading" appears
In parallel tiers—
A verse of the "Key" and a verse of God's Word.
A stranger to both
Might wonder, in sooth,
Which one was preferred, Mrs. E. or the Lord.

Now, each new secession
To "Science" profession
Must purchase a copy of "Science and Health"—
Pay membership fee,
Wherever he be,
To "Mother Church," Boston, to add to its wealth.

CHRISTIAN (?) SCIENCE

Then comes in addition
Each year an edition
Revised in an altered and amplified style.
Another taxation
For "new revelation"
Sweeps over the million of faithful, meanwhile

In cloistered seclusion
And free from intrusion,
Secure in the comfort that riches afford,
Lives out of the strife
And the struggle of life
This "Priestess," so called, of the crucified Lord.

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